



News Release



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Scottsdale Man Pleads Guilty to Producing Fake IDs and Drug Charge

(Phoenix, Ariz. – August 17, 2005) Attorney General Terry Goddard and Department of Liquor Director Leesa Berens Morrison today announced a plea agreement with Todd Martelle Van Cleave, 23, of Scottsdale. Van Cleave pled guilty to one count of Forgery and one count Possession of Narcotic Drugs.

Van Cleave was indicted by the State Grand Jury for creating a false Michigan driver's license and selling it for profit. He also pled guilty to possession of cocaine. In return for a plea agreement, a third charge for Illegally Conducting an Enterprise was dropped.

A joint investigation by Department of Liquor Licenses and Control, Tempe Police Department, Department of Public Safety and the Attorney General's Office produced evidence indicating while he was attending Arizona State University, Van Cleave was producing and distributing fake IDs. Most of the bogus IDs were produced for college students but some were intended for other purposes.

"The computer age has created the ability easily produce fake IDs," Goddard said. "The partnership between state and local government is vital to stopping these criminals who don't care who they sell fake IDs to as long as they have cash."

Van Cleave was running his illegal operation out of his Scottsdale home. An informant and undercover police officers purchased 17 fake IDs representing five states during the investigation. A search warrant at Van Cleave's home revealed numerous false identifications and state of the art computer equipment that included advanced programs, hardware and printers that were seized. During the time of his arrest Van Cleave was also in possession of narcotic drugs.

"We will continue to investigate and prosecute the manufacturers and sellers of fraudulent identifications in Arizona," Berens Morrison said. "The use of a fake ID by underage college students is also a crime that will not be overlooked."

As part of his guilty plea, Van Cleave agreed serve one year in Maricopa County Jail, pay a \$25,000 fine, perform 360 hours of community service, and receive probation. He will be sentenced September 27 before Judge James H. Keppel in Maricopa County Superior Court. Assistant Attorney General Todd Lawson prosecuted this case.

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